

TOPICS IN CALIFORNIA.

UNPRECEDENTED RAINFALL—REAL ESTATE BOOM—CHINATOWN.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]
San Francisco, Dec. 14.—The unprecedented rain-storm has been the chief topic of the week. Nothing like the rainfall has been seen here since '49. The total rainfall for the season here is nineteen inches; while the lowest is through the San Joaquin Valley, where the rainfall ranges from four to eight inches. All through the central and northern parts of the State the rain has been exceedingly heavy. The floods in the Sacramento Valley, although far less destructive than those of ten years ago, have excited more attention, because of the number of small farms along the Sacramento which have been developed lands as nearly as possible. The levee system was as nearly perfect as the best engineers could make it; but the two weeks' steady rain, with snow in the mountains, so swelled all the streams that nothing could prevent bad breaks at many points. Colusa and Chico were the only towns that were seriously menaced, and these were saved by extra precautions. Sacramento, the capital, was never in any danger.

The loss to small farmers will be heavy; but large ranch-owners, like Senator Fair and others, who sow thousands of acres to wheat, expect to be flooded two years out of five. In only a few places have buildings and bridges been carried away by the force of the current. The greater part of the ranches are simply a few feet under water. If the weather continues dry all this vast sea of water which now covers the valley will be gone within a week, and the farmers will return to their homes and begin to put in another crop.

Ex-Senator Fair and James Phelan have been heavy purchasers of business property in Front, Davis and Drumm sts. The completion of the new sea-wall has given a boom to that portion of the city, which has been greatly neglected, and prices have doubled within a single year. Real-estate speculators are now buying largely in the sandy tract, just south of Black Point Military Reservation. The cross-town cable-roads, it is expected, will lead to the building up of the district, which is pleasant and accessible, but which has been cut off from communication and exposed to the nuisances of swill-milk dairies and acid-works.

A new system has been adopted for ascertaining the available water supply of the river basins of the Coast, in order to select sites for reservoirs. The streams have been divided into classes, and a type of each has been selected for measurement. State Engineer Hall has devised a plan for estimating the velocity of streams, which plan greatly reduces the cost of such estimates made by Professor Henry's electric wheel. The latter method required a boat, and the transportation of boats in the mountains was difficult and expensive. Mr. Hall's plan is to stretch a wire across the stream and suspend an instrument from it. One may thus measure the velocity of the largest stream.

The Chinese are beginning to learn the ways of American defaulters. Hitherto the unparadiseable sin among the Mongolian business men was to embezzle money or to owe any creditor at the Chinese New Year. But all this is changed. One of their leading merchants has absconded with more than \$27,000 belonging to his firm, and the creditors attached his stock of goods, which was too bulky for him to take.

Since Mr. Bonner's visit it has become the fashion for New-Yorkers with a taste for the turf to look down Santa Barbara's Palo Alto valley at his likely young thoroughbreds, and pick up a yearling with a good record. Among the latest to join this procession is E. F. Coe, a wealthy Orange County horse breeder.

One of the worst rookeries in Chinatown was condemned this week as unsafe, but the owner refused to vacate the matter in the courts, as the Fire Department has pronounced the structure not dangerous. This will probably be made a test case. If the Health Board is defeated, it will be impossible to improve the condition of Chinatown, or to check the danger of a destructive fire. Should the courts uphold the owners of the rookeries, the city will be forced to deal with Chinatown as it did with the Forty-Fourth Street tenement.

It is expected that a large number of Eastern fruit-growers will attend the convention of the State Board of Horticulture next March, in Los Angeles. At the same time what promises to be the largest citrus fair ever held in California will be open.

The capacity of the beet sugar factory at Alvarado, across the bay from San Francisco, will be doubled next year. The beet crop this season was below the average, but the yield of sugar was unusually large. This factory has no connection with Spreckels's company.

The Sacramento Society of Pioneers has issued an appeal to all its societies in the State to contribute to the fund for the purchase of Sutter's Fort. Eighteen thousand dollars are needed to buy the property. It is the intention to restore the old fort without injury to its historical features.

IN BUSY HARTFORD.

THE FREE LIBRARY—NEWS OF THE CHURCHES—AN INCONVENIENT RAILWAY STATION.

Hartford, Dec. 14 (Special).—The offer of \$275,000 toward the founding of a free library in this city which came from several well-known gentlemen, including Messrs. Morgan, the London banker, is in danger of lapsing, because of the inaction of the citizens in accepting the conditions. These were in substance that the sum should be increased by local subscriptions to \$400,000. The committee having the matter in charge has not taken the public into its confidence, so that the exact state of the fund is not known. It is certain, however, that Mr. Morgan will not hold the offer open much longer, as it has now been pending since June, 1888. Unless something should be done very soon the opportunity will slip by and there will be no library.

The Rev. Dr. George B. Van De Water, who has been interested in the Advent mission, under the auspices of the Episcopal churches here, has made public the astounding statement that he finds more drunkenness among women in Hartford proportionately than he has found in New-York, Glasgow or Dublin. This statement has aroused the feeling of the people to a great extent, and there is a loud call for more efficient enforcement of the law against drunkenness, and also for a police station for the care of female prisoners in the police station. No authority has as yet ventured to question Dr. Van De Water's statement.

The resignation of the Rev. Charles E. Stowe from the pulpit of the Windsor Avenue Congregational Church is rather a surprise. It was known that his pastoral work, the care of the property interests of his mother, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and his work for the past year and a half upon her biography, have been a severe strain upon his nervous system, but it was not until he visited Florida, in November, that he himself began to realize the broken condition of his health. The relations between pastor and people are of an unusually amiable nature. His resignation must, of necessity, be accepted.

The Board of Trade and the Consolidated Road have been having a bout over the inconveniences of the new Union Railroad Station. So far the road has the best of the situation but by all odds the worst of the argument. The expenditure of an overhead station for so large a railroad centre as Hartford is one that was by no means the choice of the people of the city. But such was the design of the road itself, and the Board of Trade thinks it ought to do the very best it can with the station to make it as convenient as possible. It is at present a long way from that. The delays in the matter of checking and receiving baggage are most annoying, owing to insufficient accommodations. The system of sending off one track from all the others in order to make safety more apparent is looked upon as a nuisance, and the approaches from the waiting-room to the trains are not liked at all. Indeed, it would not take much provocation for the people of the city to agree unanimously that the station is for convenience the worst in the country.

The Connecticut Home, the Prohibition organ, which has its publication office in Williamstown, announces that it will henceforth be published in Hartford, and that a company with a capital stock of \$15,000 will back up the paper. This has not been a great deal of hard work into it. The Prohibitionists have contributed to its support in lump sums during campaign time, but the subscription list has been very large. The paper has labored under the disadvantage of publishing Williamstown for the last year.

The week has been notable for one of the biggest Connecticut Lodge of Odd Fellows, the Army of the Republic, which is the largest in the city, has been formed.

to the doors every evening, and the lodge has fair to make a goodly sum of money from the venture. H. Hayden, well known in insurance circles as the editor of "The Underwriter," has been appointed by the Census Bureau to gather the statistics relating to insurance.

THE BROTHERHOOD UNEASY.

DESERTIONS FROM IT REASSURE THE LEAGUE.

BASEBALL CHAT ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS—A BROOKLYN REGIMENT TO PLAY GAMES INDOORS.

The delegates to the Brotherhood or Players' League convention, which will be held at the Fifth Avenue Hotel to-morrow, have been arriving in the city for the last three days. The early comers are mostly players and why they should come so much unnecessary haste is something which they themselves do not care to divulge. The club owners agree that their old players are growing restless and uneasy, and that it will be only a month or so before the Players' League will give up the ghost and most of the men will go back to their old clubs. The steady desertion of the players from the Brotherhood at this early stage has or will have its effect both upon the other players and upon the moneyed men who are furnishing the money of war. Of course the leaders, Pfeffer, Ward, O'Rourke, Keefe, Hanlon, Brothers and others, are working earnestly for their cause and doing all they can to make their fellows keep the original agreement. Still the crisis is almost here and soon there will either be a stampede to go back into the League, or the Brotherhood will be placed on a sounder footing than it is at present. Tomorrow's Players' League convention will have to do more than the one held several weeks ago did. If at this meeting a permanent organization is not effected, officers elected and the committees appointed, it will be impossible longer to conceal the organization's weakness from the general public. Director Haynes, of the new Boston club seems to be the most popular candidate for the presidency. Chicago will also send an applicant for the place. There is some uncertainty about who will get the place of secretary. The local Brotherhood officials say that Manager Harry Wright, of Philadelphia, is a candidate for the place in spite of the fact that he indignantly denies the report.

The club owners are, of course, jubilant over securing some of their old players, but they are happier still in the belief that the courts will sustain them in the injunctions which they intend to get against the other players who deserted them. There has been a decided change in the feelings of the managers during the past week. There is no doubt now that the club owners firmly believe that they will be able to compel their men to live up to the agreements in their last year's contract. They acknowledge, however, that they cannot compel the players to sign similar contracts next season binding them for 1891. No contracts now are considered of secondary importance, as the general opinion is that if the Players' League is broken up, it will never be resurrected. John E. Day looks cheerful and healthy, and seems positively to have gained flesh in the last ten days. Mr. Day is a man on whose face trouble always shows itself. He looked despondent and pale a few weeks ago, but since the League Committee's conference with Everts, Choate & Beaman, the lawyers, the ruler of the Giants has taken on his usual hale and hearty look. "I feel much encouraged," said he last night, "and I don't think the Brotherhood has one chance in one thousand to carry out its scheme. I think that every one of our old men will play with us next season. I don't say that the League will discipline the leaders in this movement, but I would not be surprised to see some of them making tickets at the turnstile next season, instead of playing ball. We can't release those players, for their contracts will not permit. We will have to pay them their salaries."

The 11th Regiment, of Brooklyn, promises an innovation in the line of baseball. Arrangements are being made for the organization of a league among the men of that regiment to play baseball in the army in the evenings. The games will be played by gaslight. The National League rules will be used with a few exceptions. The bats are to be made of light wood, the lighter the better, but will be of the regulation size. The players will wear canvas shoes, and will be allowed to prevent slipping on the floor. The regulation nine innings will be done away with, and a game will consist of one hour and thirty minutes' play, the team which is in the lead at the expiration of that time to be the winner. A ball hit into the left gallery will count for full two bases, while a ball hit into the gallery at the end of the ball will count for a home run. Every foul ball caught on the fly, including a foul fly, will be counted out. A ball striking the ceiling or side wall, and is afterward caught by a player, the play will be called a fair catch.

The new regimental league will make a firm stand in regard to protecting its umpires. There will be so many guns and bayonets lying around these that it was decided that stringent rules ought to be made. The umpire's decisions will be final in all cases. The team which disputes a decision will lose one of its runs for the first offence. For a repetition of the crime the player will be fined or ordered from the field, or, rather, the army. No man can play unless he is a regular member of the company to whose team he belongs. The ball used will be of a novel kind. The foundation will be a lawn-tennis ball, around which will be wound yarn until the regulation size is reached. The ball will be covered with leather, and will weigh two ounces less than the regulation ball. The Board of Directors of the new league will be: Sergeant Nash, of Company F, chairman; Corporal Allen, of Company K; F. R. Barnard, of Company I; Kimball, of Company G; Chester, of the Cavalry; Joseph, of Company B; Lieutenant Crolius, of Company E, and Brotherhood, of Company H. Games will be played on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while an exhibition game will be played on every other day. In each match, when an admission fee will be charged. The pitcher's box will be a rubber mat.

The famous old Polo Grounds at One-hundred-and-forty-fifth and Fifth-ave. have at last been wiped out and the "Admiral's revenge" is complete. The old diamond has disappeared and even the fences and grandstand have been carted away. Just \$17,000 was spent on those stands, and when they were sold for old lumber, the other day, they brought \$135. The fences cost \$5,000, and at the sale the lumber brought \$50. The big building at One-hundred-and-forty-fifth and Fifth-ave, where so many paraded troops have been quartered, brought \$2,000. The little frame house next door, which was used for the same purpose, was sold for \$25. The regret over the destruction of the old Polo Grounds is, however, forgotten in a few years, when handsome homes will dot the old field.

Winter Dats at Newport.
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL NOTES.
Newport, R. I., Dec. 14 (Special).—The cottagers who are spending the winter here are delighted with the weather. No snow has fallen, and there is scarcely any ice. The hill residents are quietly enjoying their seclusion, and they occasionally make flying trips to New-York and Boston.

Roland King has returned here from a two weeks' visit to Lakewood, N. J., and he will reside during the winter at the Grosvenor cottage.

Miss Whipple, granddaughter of the late Governor Thomas Swann, of Maryland, will be married to H. Powell, son of John Hare Powell, early in January. The ceremony, which will take place here, will be attended by the elite of the place.

Harry Orlin has entirely recovered from his serious illness.

Amos T. French, a member of the polo club, has been elected treasurer of the Manhattan Trust Company of New-York.

Miss Tull, of Providence, is the guest of Mrs. Charles M. O'Brien, of New-York, who will occupy her villa at Ochepoint all winter.

The engagement of the eldest daughter of Bishop Potter, of New-York, to C. H. Russell, Jr., has been announced here, where the young couple summer.

Miss Mary B. Post, of Emanuel Church, has been named as the bride of Mr. E. M. Young, of the city.

Extensive alterations and improvements are being made to the cottages on Kayast, owned by Mrs. Grace T. Turnbull and Captain M. C. Martin, U. S. N.

The late General Israel Vordere, U. S. N., who died in the late war, was formerly in command of the 4th Artillery at Fort Adams in this harbor.

Henry A. Taylor, of New-York, who owns a villa here, has imported a large herd of cattle from the island of Guernsey, and they are now at his farm near this place.

Mrs. M. B. Blatchford, of New-York, has quit-claimed her cottage on Beach-st. to Robert S. Hone, of the same city.

Mary A. Stevens has purchased that portion of the Bateman estate owned by Mrs. Harriet B. Almy, of New-York.

J. Van D. Bond, of New-York, has paid \$27,700 for the estate on Bellevue-ave, owned by Edward M. Piddiford, of New-York.

CHERRY DIAMOND ATHLETES.

SKETCH OF A POPULAR ORGANIZATION.

THE FOUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MANHATTAN ATHLETIC CLUB.

HAPPENINGS WHICH LED TO ITS ESTABLISHMENT—WHAT ITS MEMBERS HAVE DONE IN THE FIELD—THE NEW CLUB-HOUSE SOME OF ITS FAMOUS REPRESENTATIVES.

The development of amateur sports in New-York and its vicinity has taken place almost entirely within the last twenty years. The New-York Athletic Club came to life in 1866. Before that time the Caledonian Club was the only association in New-York devoted to general athletics. Now the number is great, and the city without its regularly organized athletic club is a poor place indeed.

The Manhattan Athletic Club, one of the most popular institutions of its kind in the country, owes its existence to four young men whose names

the rest of the members, immediately excavated and laid out the grounds. A cinder track was laid out an eighth of a mile in circuit, and in the spring of 1878 the gates were thrown open to the public for a series of exhibition games. From that date to the present time there has been no doubt about the prosperity of the Manhattan Athletic Club.

The hearts of the Manhattans beat high on that opening day, and 200 chairs were hired on which to seat the spectators. The rental of those chairs cost \$25, and this gigantic sum, coupled with the other expenses, threatened to give two or three of the members heart disease. Handsome medals were given to the competitors, although the entrance was free. McEwing, LaMontagne, Wilmer, Holise and Armstrong, famous athletes at that time, were among the contestants.

The four-story stone mansion at No. 524 Fifth-ave. was then secured for a clubhouse. The club is still located there, but expects to take possession of its handsome new clubhouse, in Madison-ave., in the early spring.

The selection of a club emblem caused much discussion before the famous cherry diamond, now so conspicuous at all athletic gatherings, was adopted. At first there were no distinguishing



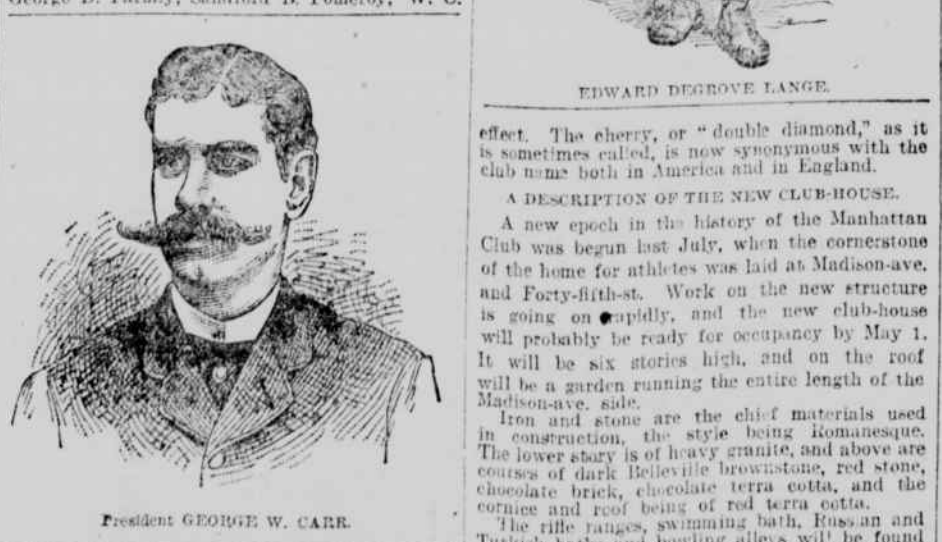
THE NEW MANHATTAN ATHLETIC CLUB CLUB-HOUSE.

are as well known in mercantile and professional life as in athletic circles. Just twelve years ago these young men held a little consultation in the Knickerbocker Cottage at No. 456 Sixth-ave. They were primarily responsible for its origin, and excluding a polite and energetic waiter, were the only four people present at the meeting.

In the spring of that year George W. Carr, George W. Thomas, William S. Riddabach and Robert B. Culbert had a discussion as to their relative abilities as pedestrians. As a result, a five-mile walking race was arranged and took place at the American Institute Fair Building. Victor and the vanquished were so well pleased with their effort that they looked around for new opportunities in which to show their athletic ability. The Scottish-American Athletic Club was then one of the most prominent clubs of its kind in the city. One of the young men mentioned above determined to join this club, and sent in his name for that purpose. A slight technical obstacle arose and his application was not entertained by the club. The young man, keenly sensible to the rebuff he had received, withdrew his application and vowed that he would establish an athletic club which would not only equal that which had refused his application, but would in time be its superior in every way.

Shortly after that the four young men called a meeting and invited many of their friends to be present. About forty persons were present, and before the meeting was adjourned a new athletic club had been formed. It was named after Manhattan Island. At that meeting twenty persons at once signed the roll, and the Manhattan Athletic Club has been one of the institutions of New-York ever since.

THE CLUB IS INCORPORATED.
In the following spring the club was incorporated by George W. Carr, George W. Thomas, George D. Purdy, Sanford B. Pomeroy, W. C.



President GEORGE W. CARR.

France, Jr., Henry P. Pike, W. H. Griffin, John Fraser and E. G. Gurney. The bright young men connected with the organization recognized that if they wished successfully to compete with the older clubs and to give new stimulus to local athletics, they would have to institute some new features in their club, or to start out in some new direction. It was an ambitious move for so young an organization, but the members determined at once to establish a track and grounds within the city limits, and as soon as their financial condition warranted it, to build a clubhouse, suitable for club, gymnasium and social purposes. The committee appointed for the purpose had many weary tramps over Manhattan Island before the well-known grounds at Eighth-ave. and Fifty-sixth-st. were secured. The work of fitting up the grounds and meeting the necessary expenses was a heavy burden for the athletes, and rival organizations predicted that with such unhelped extravagance the Manhattan Club would not live a year. The founders, however, had plenty of luck, and with the financial encouragement from

"Unity is Strength" was never better exemplified than in the history of the Manhattan Athletic Club. The policy originally adopted has been strictly adhered to, and even in the selection of officers there have been few changes from year to year. George W. Carr, the bright young attorney, whose office is in the Drexel Building, has held the office of president continuously since the club's organization. It would be a difficult matter to secure a more complete endorsement of club management.

A RECORD TO BE PROUD OF.

In Mr. Carr's address at the laying of the cornerstone of the new clubhouse, he said that the Manhattan Club had been the first to establish athletic grounds within the city limits. He also asserted that the M. A. C. had done much to encourage athletic ability and to send athletes

to take part in contests abroad in which championships were won. In every contest since 1879 in which the club had taken part, Mr. Carr was proud to say that the club had the honorable distinction of having won the title of champion.

"And now we will have the first club-house in the world," said President Carr yesterday. "The objects of our club will be as heretofore, to supply sports, recreation, exercise and amusements which will tend to make the members morally, physically and intellectually better men and more useful citizens."

We have about 600 members now, and that number will probably be increased to 1,000, our present limit, as soon as we move into our new quarters. The athletic condition is, in better shape to-day than ever before. An additional interest is constantly appearing. The health and development of pupils in the public school ought to be considered."

George A. Avery is the chairman recently appointed to look after new grounds, as the club may be forced to vacate its present grounds at any time. There is a building crane on the West Side and land in that part of the city is very valuable. Just where the new grounds will be located is not yet decided, but when the site is secured the grounds will be made the finest in the country. The idea is to get land on some waterfront, as the club has long desired to make boat-ing one of its principal features. The new field will be elaborately laid out, and will provide for special teams, courts, cricket and baseball grounds. The club would like to secure a place similar to Travers' Island, but nearer the city and easier of access.

MEMBERS WHO HAVE WON ATHLETIC FAIR.
Among the cherry diamond athletes who have made famous records might be mentioned L. E. Myers, Frederick Westing, Edward Degrove Lange, T. P. Conneff, William B. Page, Joseph F. Donaghy, A. F. Copeland, John Fraser, Arthur G. Waldron, Charles E. Trotter, F. A. Ware, T. S. Thompson, W. C. Walton, A. J. Van Lann, Julien S. Ulman, E. A. Thompson, W. F. Saydam, S. S. Schuyler, W. D. Skidman, W. C. Richardson, C. O. Perry, C. Platt, Jr., A. McEiffers, G. Y. Gilbert, S. J. Connolly, J. E. Connolly, W. J. Connolly, F. S. Appley, W. S. Hart, Edward Gurney, W. S. Taliferro, J. S. Voorhees, W. C. White, J. B. White, W. H. Purdy, L. J. Johnson, Sanford B. Pomeroy, F. J. Murray, S. Derisheles, Jr., George Parly, George McNie, F. S. Lambacher, E. McCaffrey, Henry Fredericks, T. S. Smith, J. M. Young, E. W. Brown, W. H. Griffin, Henry Pike, D. L. Thompson, J. Magee, F. J. Graham, W. F. Bailey, L. P. Smith, Walton Stern, L. A. Stuart, H. M. Stone, W.

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We have about 600 members now, and that number will probably be increased to 1,000, our present limit, as soon as we move into our new quarters. The athletic condition is, in better shape to-day than ever before. An additional interest is constantly appearing. The health and development of pupils in the public school ought to be considered."

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